2; Skreferud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

796 When the young men and girls have finished dancing, they again go to the house of the Jog Mañjhi, to pass the night there. When it becomes dawn next day, the girls plaster the courtyard in the house of the Jog Mañjhi with cow-dung, they draw and bring water, and the young men collect and bring together the straw bundles put on the heads of the bullocks. This they thresh, and this and the paddy that they gathered at the final dancing and begging the Jog Mañjhi measures out to the girls, dividing it between them, to make rice. Thereupon the Jog Mañjhi gives the young men and girls their noon meal. When they have eaten, he gives them in charge in their respective homes. Now the Sohrae is at an end.

When the girls have made the paddy that the Jog Mañjhi measured out to them in rice, they bring it to him. Of this he brews beer. After some ten days he gathers all the people of the village in his house. He gives them this beer, and he gives food to the young men and girls. This beer they call the chaṭiar (social cleansing) beer of the young men and girls. By this beer the young men and girls are "eaten" back into society again; their exemption is ended, and the closed ears of the village people are also opened.

The Sakrat[37] is the last day of the month of Pus. On the day two days before this day they have a village council and talk together, saying: To-morrow we shall catch fish and crabs, the day after we shall have the Sakrat. Consequently next day they catch fish and crabs. On the day of the Sakrat they at cockcrow kill a fowl in every house. When they have prepared rice and curry and have returned from bathing, they eat the rice and flesh curry, curry of fish, and crabs or any other stuff. When the sun is up, the men go to hunt. They hunt in a near forest. They bring Sal-leaves home with them; they go to bathe and return. In the meantime the women have prepared flattened rice and cakes. This the men offer to the bongas in every house, they offer it to the ancestors, and they pour out beer as a libation to these and to Marañ buru. Thereupon they make invocations in the name of the Sakrat, like the invocations at other times. They eat the cakes and the flattened rice. When they have eaten, the Jog Mañjhi invites them to come along and shoot at a target. He cuts down a plantain tree or a ricinus tree and takes this along. In the open place at the end of the village street he fixes it in the ground. Now the village priest first shoots at the target post. After him all the village men shoot, until it is hit. Then when some one has hit it, the Jog Mañjhi goes and cuts the target post down with a battle-axe, and the Jog Mañjhi carries the one who hit it on his shoulder from there to the assembled people. And they both salute all the people, commencing from the village headman.

• [526]

[535] Now the young men dance the sword-dance and make many kinds of show. When they have finished acting in this way, they return to the village. The target post that the Jog Mañjhi cut down two men carry along on their shoulders like an animal. All enter the

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[37] Hindi saṅkrānt, the passage of the sun into a new sign.

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Baṭèhin hèralòñ
Ḍaṇḍa ka bàsi ho;
Gòṭèhin hèralio
Gàia jo yo re;
Gòṭèhin hèralio
Gàia jo.

The sense of the above folk-song may thus be rendered in English:—

Who has created this world?
Who has created the cattle?
Ṭhàkur (God) has created this world.
Ṭhàkur has created the cattle.
The hawk created Kanu Gowala,
He used to feed cows in the east.
Well, my son! (Kanu) where have you lost your flute which you always keep in your loin?

Kanu replies:—

I have lost my flute in yonder field;
I have lost my cattle in yonder pasture.

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Thereafter, the Santals take a meal and assemble at the *Jahèrthan*, where one of the most interesting sports is witnessed. The village-elders sit. The cow-boys of the tribe are summoned before them and asked to make their cows walk on a particular spot on which eggs have been placed. The cow-boy, who can make his cow break the egg or even smell it, is called the "Lucky Boy" by the applause

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of the audience. The feet of the successful cow are then ceremonially washed.[1]

The second day is devoted to the preparation of food for the different tribal gods, in whose honour animals like fowls, goats and pigs are sacrificed. Ancestor-spirits are also worshipped and their memory honoured and offerings and libations made to them at home by heads of families. The evening is spent in community feasts on a large scale with drinks of rice-beer offered to the gods and thereafter drunk by the members of the tribe.

The climax of the ceremonials reaches with the worship of cows (*Gohal Puja*). When all are sleeping, young men of the tribe keep vigil and go from place to place to awaken the cows, beginning with the Headman's house, playing on pipes and kettle-drums.

The following is a song sung on the occasion: —

Gàini còlilo sirìbinda bònè ho,
Màhisini carae gaṅga para jo yo re, -
Màhisini carae gaṅga para jo.

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1 E. G. Man, in his *Sonthalia and the Sonthals* (p. 57) in this connection refers to the Egyptian myth of the "Bull and the Egg." The ceremony consists in newly laid hen's eggs being placed on the village lane and oxen driven past, and the one who stoops to smell the egg is held in high estimation for the year. "I believe," says Man, "the Egyptian mythology states that the earth came out of an egg which the bull broke."

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796 horns decorated with garlands and cakes made of [231] treacle. The young sportsmen of the village now come in a body and begin poking these animals and dance round them, all the while trying to snatch away the cakes. This "War-dance" being over, [526] the villagers assemble at the Headman's house and engage in a picturesque competition in playing with bamboo-staff and shields.

Next follows *Hako Katkòm*, meaning the day for catching fish and crabs. It is the religious duty of all Santals to go out hunting on this day and if they cannot find anything else, they must at least kill fish or crabs.

[574] Now the ceremonials draw to a close ; and on a special day called *Jale*, the members of the tribe visit from house to house and exchange greetings.

796 A whole week of festivities comes to a close
526 with *Bejha*, (to shoot at a target) a day of sports. There is a good deal of animation in the tribe and before a vast congregation *lathi* (bamboo-staff) play, shooting at a mark with arrows and measuring individual strength take place, those successful being cheered and conveyed to the Headman's house on the shoulders of their friends.

796 *Sobrae at Mayurbhanj*

In Mayurbhanj, the *Sobrae* is generally called as *Bandhna* or *Kali Puja*, and celebrated along with

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796 dances round the *Karam* branch. The conclusion
796 of the dance sees a tug-of-war between the youths
• 526 and maidens of the tribe, for the latter won't allow the branch to be taken away for immersion by the former; and this trial of strength can only be avoided if the lopped branch can be stolen away from the vigilant eyes of the other sex. This tug-of-war is a pure amusement. There is no hidden meaning behind the custom.

796 At midnight, the villagers take a nocturnal
231 round near cow-sheds singing songs with musical accompaniments, with the object of kissing the cattle and thus adoring them.

The third day is devoted to sports with the cattle. Early in the morning the members of the tribe assemble at the house of the Headman with their drums and other musical instruments and make *biras* (a stack of paddy coiled together in a circle) according to the number of cattle in the Headman's cattle-shed and tack them to their horns. They get a bit frightened and are let loose amidst the din of drums, and as they rush out, men shower on them rice-beer and women stone them with eggs. As the cattle run on pell-mell, the last one is caught by an enterprising Santal, and its feet are washed with a good deal of ceremony.

796 Next, a punch is made of the Headman's rice-
273 beer with those of the other cattle-owners, and drunk
769 after offering it to the ancestor-spirits.

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796 the Hindu festival prevalent on the day. This
[769] is also called *Sakrant puja* and performed on an elaborate scale at Mayurbhanj, when *chira* (flattened rice) and molasses are offered to the dead ancestors.

796 On the first day, called "Banundi," people catch
262 fish and crab in the belief that if they can eat them on the day, they will be given a long lease of life. Tasteful cakes of meat, sun-dried rice-flour are prepared in all households ; and after baths, the Santals eat them with treacle and *til* (sesamum),
[273] *chira* (flattened rice) being a compulsory item. Meanwhile, drinks of rice-beer go on.

796 Towards evening, the people indulge in archery
[526] competition on a target placed on a plantain tree. The successful one is cheered by the tribe and conveyed to the Headman's residence with a great demonstration, where the tribe is entertained with rice-beer and fried-rice. He, who can maintain a uniform record for three consecutive years, is awarded a special prize by the Headman, amidst tribal songs and dances.

The conclusion of the festival sees a great deal
[532] of mirth in all the houses. Puppet monkeys made
[574] of straw are made to dance from house to house. People raise subscriptions for a tribal dinner and the country-side rings with merry music and laughter of a good time.

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796 533 [539] thus in the first few stanzas:—(*translated*).

Semi-chorus:

On the Pipul tree, the wood-pecker is twittering.
Under the banyan tree, the *gutrut* is singing.
Has the Spring arrived?,

Second semi-chorus answers:

[539] The seasons have changed, so the wood-pecker twitters;
The Spring has come back so the *gutrut* babbles.

The Spring has come back to us.

796 [526] The second day's programme, which includes the shooting at *sal*-flowers, is the most picturesque. Early in the morning, the priest's wife grinds flour. The Headman's orderly goes round the village gathering rice, salt and turmeric. All then go to the Holy Grove singing all the way. The priest carries a big basket containing a chain, bracelets, broom-stick, bows, arrows and horns; and a smaller one with rice, oil, vermilion, flour and pick-axe. [778] A small holy-water pot is conveyed there by a bachelor youth.

Here, the actor-deities of the previous day are again inspired. They wear their traditional insignia and run to the jungles, followed by the young men. There, Mòṇṛèṇko shoots at the sprouting *sal*-flowers with an arrow, Maraṅ Buru climbs the tree and cuts

41 Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
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796 241 tied and vermilion with mustard oil painted. Friends come and go visiting one another, all (both male and female) more or less drunk and wild with excitement. [624] After all is over, the young people drink and eat in the house of the *jog-manjhi*.

[786] The other two days are for nothing but to enjoy life, merry-making going on in full swing with full sex license. For the five days and nights during which the festival lasts the Santals indulge in a veritable saturnalia giving themselves up to dancing, eating, drinking, singing and sexual license. Although this license does not allow adultery, nor does it sanction intercourse between persons of the same sept, yet if the latter offence is committed it is punished less severely than at other times.

796 **Sakrat Festival.** After this another festival known as *Sakrat* takes place on the last day of the month of [177] [226] Pous (December and January). This is an imitation of the Hindu *Pous Sankranti* festival. The Santals (only males) go out fishing to the streamlet a day before the actual festival. From the morning of that day the women are busy preparing cakes of parched rice. [262] The men folk eat curd and parched rice (chura) and go out for hunting in the morning. The cakes are first offered to the ancestors and then eaten. In the after- [526] [624] noon the *Jogmanjhi* collects all the adult males of the village in an adjoining field for archery and other sports. After that in the evening they dance and sing, drink rice beer and spend the day in various kinds of [262] amusements. On the third day they go out to the fair or market (*hat*) after eating a preparation of rice and dal boiled together.

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this festival resembles those of all the others but at the end of the offering a ceremony takes place. A wooden pole, about twelve cubits long, is erected and made to turn a half circle perpendicularly and horizontally. The pole is fastened on a loose but strong iron pivot which rests in hole made in two upright pieces of wood about six feet in height from the ground. On the top of this revolving pole is tied a small ornamented umbrella and this is caused to jerk first one way and then the other. The reaction of this pole is followed with shouts and other noisy demonstrations of delight, the people gather handfuls of dust and dirt and forthwith begin to pelt the umbrella. This novel mode of veneration is at the same time accompanied with dances both by males and females. Refreshments and handia (rice beer) are dealt out from sheds erected for the purpose and the whole assembled population regale themselves in the open air with it. The sacrifices in this festival are always eaten at home and not on the spot.

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Pata Parab: This festival is performed by the Santals in the month of Bhadra in honour of their *Pata Bonga*. It is a corrupt form of the Hindu *Charak festival*, in which the Hindus offer puja to Lord Siva. During this time Santals do acrobatic acts in honour of their deity. On a vertical pole a revolving cross bar is fixed, on either end of which a man is held by an iron hook fastened to his clothing. The pair then are swung round and round very fast. Now-a-days instead of the iron hook a length of rope is used to hold the men in position. In this festival the same sacrifices are offered as at *Jatra Parab*.

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